

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-10

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R 070745Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8724

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 0080

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VN, MY

SUBJ: "STRAITS TIMES" CONTINUES "BALANCED" COVERAGE OF VIETNAM

WAR

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 6144 (NOTAL)

B. KUALA LUMPUR 6102 (NOTAL)

C. KUALA LUMPUR 6001 (NOTAL)

D. KUALA LUMPUR 5976 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN CONTINUATION OF COUNTERPOINT EXERCISE FIRST
NOTED REF B EDIT PAGE OF TODAY'S GOM-OWNED "NEW STRAITS TIMES"
(NST) FEATURES EDIT ACCUSING NORTH VIETNAM OF CONSISTENTLY
SABOTAGING CEASEFIRE, AND ALSO FEATURES FIRST PART OF TWO-PART
ARTICLE BY LEADER OF MALAYSIAN AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY
ORGANIZATION (AAPSO) DELEGATION WHICH RECENTLY VISITED HANOI
(REF A), ARTICLE PROVIDES LITTLE OVERT PRAISE OF DRV, BUT
NOTES THAT MASSES OF PEOPLE IN HANOI SEEM HAPPY AND EXUBERANT.
THESE ARTICLES HIGHLIGHT GOM DESIRE TO MAINTAIN SEMBLANCE OF
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NON-ALIGNMENT, WHILE EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER CURRENT INDOCHINA

SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

2. EDITORIAL IN JAN 7TH GOM-OWNED "NEW STRAITS TIMES" ON HEAVY FIGHTING IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA ACCUSES COMMUNISTS OF CONSISTENT SABOTAGE OF CEASEFIRE". EDIT STATES THAT CAMBODIAN INSURGENTS FIGHTING IN PHNOM PENH AREA HAVE BEEN REINFORCED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE AND VC UNITS. TURNING ATTENTION TO SOUTH VIETNAM, EDIT SAYS INTER ALIA: "THE SCALE OF THE COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE ON THE EVE OF THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS, REFUTES HANOI'S REPEATED CLAIMS THAT SAIGON, AND THE AMERICANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMPLETE BREAKDOWN OF THE CEASEFIRE. THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT HAS CALLED FOR NEW NEGOTIATIONS...SAIGON HAS PUT THE BLAME WHERE IT BELONGS."

3. IN INTERESTING COUNTERPOINT, EDIT PAGE ALSO FEATURES FIRST PART OF TWO-PART ARTICLE BY MAZLAN NOORDIN, LEADER OF MALAYSIAN AAPSO DELEGATION WHICH VISITED NORTH VIETNAM DEC 16-27, MAZLAN'S ARTICLE IS ESSENTIALLY NON-POLEMICAL IN TONE BUT SEVERAL REFERENCES ARE MADE TO US BOMBING, AND ATTENTION DRAWN TO NVN "DETERMINATION TO UNITE WITH THE SOUTH." ARTICLE ALSO DESCRIBES MASSES OF PEOPLE AS SEEING "HAPPY AND EXUBERANT," NOTES THAT CHILDREN DO NOT MARCH TO SCHOOL IN MILITARY FORMATION AND THAT SMALL BUSINESSES ALLOWED OPERATE, IN CONTRAST TO "SOME COMMUNIST COUNTRIES." EMBASSY WILL POUCH FULL TEXT OF EDIT AND ARTICLE TO SAIGON.

4. COMMENT: APPEARANCE OF EDIT AND ARTICLE ON SAME PAGE HIGHLIGHTS GOM DESIRE MAINTAIN SEMBLANCE OF NON-ALIGNMENT WHILE EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM. AS GOM MFA FREQUENTLY SUGGESTS EDITORIAL COMMENT TO NST, ONE CAN ASSUME THAT EDIT IS AUTHENTIC VOICE OF GOM.
END COMMENT.
UNDERHILL

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